101 619 9. The Bongale. Three large villages belonging to this group are to be found in the territory under discussion. In order of their size they are: Bongale wɛ̌ Bosɛ́lɔ́ (among the Lifumba, between the Bosɛ́mbɛ́, Loifima and Sadzi rivers), Bongale wɛ̌ Ilinga (among the Bakɛ́ala, near Ikɛ́ngɛ́), and Bongale wɛ̌ Bosɔ́ngɛ́ (among the Bonkoso, [569] near Bempumba). The difference between their rules of exogamy and those of the other tribes confirms the view that the Bongale are not true Nkumbɔ́. (2)

2. See Chapter V, Article III. There are several other small Bongale groups, but I do not know whether they are related to those mentioned above. Among them are those living near Bonyeka (Busira) among the Bɔ́ɛngi (Bokɛ́la, Bɔ́ɛnjola). They may be descended from different ancestors who all bore the name Ngale. The same name may indicate an identical origin, but it may also be derived from different individuals whose names were the same. This statement is generally applicable.

The tribes living between the Jwalɛ́ and the Boloko, with whom the Bolɛ́ngɛ́ and the Ntɔ́mbɛ́ between the Congo and the Boloko are sometimes classified, are grouped under the general name of Ilingɛ́ by the Bɔ́ngɛ́, Injɔ́lɔ́, and Elɛ́ngɛ́. (3)

[114] 3. The Bokele tribe listed on the above-mentioned map does not exist. Could this error be due to an incorrect extension of the name of a Boloki village near Bokɛ́ma which is called Bokɛ́lɛ́?

The Nkumbɔ́-Mongo came from the north or the northeast. (4)

● [825] 4. The following note may be of interest: The stories and songs of the Nkumbɔ́ indicate a

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recollection of an animal of the leopard family which they call bokonga. Their description of it corresponds to the lion. Some soldiers and other expatriates, who were also young people, shown representations of a lion immediately identified it with their bokonga.

The groups under discussion here lived for a time on the banks of the Luwo (Maringa) and the [11] upper Ikelemba, (1) then under

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1. It appears that between the Ikelemba and its tributary the Losilifa, there is still a bonkom tree called w'ãmenga (of bald heads) under which, according to tradition, the ancestors held their councils. Nearby there is a bosêê whose fruits never ripen.

pressure from other Mongo tribes, they crossed the Tshuapa-Ruki. They evicted the Ekonda and settled in their present location. This exodus must have taken place a fairly long time ago; it is impossible to determine the date and difficult to make any estimates. In any case it must have occurred 150 to 200 years ago.

244 These peoples are primarily farmers; they grow chiefly bananas, manioc, yams, colocasia [taro], sweet potatoes, sugar cane, and various vegetables and condiments. The food crops they grow, together with what they gather and the Elaeis palm trees provide them with a continuous and abundant food supply, as long as elephants do [131] not interfere. Their domestic animals include chickens, goats, and 224 dogs. (2) Hunting is a pleasant change of activity rather than an

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2. Ducks have been introduced fairly recently, but they were known long before colonial times. They came from the south. Sheep have been introduced only in the last few decades, and they are found only in a few villages on the river banks in the lowlands.

§92 in which they are manufactured, and consequently in the way they
[§24] are used. The most common ingredients are certain leaves mixed with red rouge (ngɛlɛ) and a sort of lichen which forms red slabs on the bark of certain species found in the forest; the whole thing is
[§25] carefully wrapped in a small fur (especially the skin of the small feline iyɛ́).

The charm is hidden under a slat of the bed where the desired one takes her nightly rest. Because this is done an ardent love for the owner of the charm will grow in her heart. Or it may be placed somewhere in a hut; then the desired woman is called in, the owner of the charm takes her arm, and the *ɛfɔndɛ́* immediately "turns her heart." Or, still without the woman's knowledge, the charm is thrown into the fire where the cooks. If she begins to sneeze when she returns home, this is a sign that the smoke charged with mysterious emanations from the philter has pepetrated through her nostrils all the way to her heart and filled it with ardent love for the Adonis in question.

The *ɛfɔndɛ́* is considered an ikɔ́lɔ, that is, a subjugation. *Ɛfɔndɛ́ ɛkɔ́kɔ bɛ́mɛtɛ*, "the *ɛfɔndɛ́* masters women, has power over
[§24] them." The substance which prevents the *ɛfɔndɛ́* from being efficacious is the bokai, a kind of sour vegetable. [102] The owner of the philter must abstain from eating it. For the bokai cause vomiting and if he ate any the woman would in the same manner eject her love and thus make the *bɔ́sɔ́* ineffective.

2. *Bɔ́sɔ́fɛ́*

Contrary to the *ɛfɔndɛ́*, the *bɔ́sɔ́fɛ́* is a love philter which is not available to everyone; it is a charm only for dancers of the iyaya. This does not mean that all the artists who perform this dance have it, but they alone are acquainted with it. The material basis of the *bɔ́sɔ́fɛ́*, as of most Nkundó *bɔ́sɔ́*, are the leaves of certain plants.

The efficacy of the *bɔ́sɔ́fɛ́* is infallible. It acts not only on the beloved one, but also on any woman who involuntarily or on purpose fulfills the condition necessary to its operation. That is, as soon as a woman's head touches the arm of the possessor of the *bɔ́sɔ́fɛ́*, her heart is moved in his favor; should she be married, her love for her

The Bongangɛ are divided as follows:

1) Bongangɛ, in the narrow sense of the term (Basɛkɛ Inandɔ, B. Bolakɛ, B. Bongɛngɛ, B. Bandɛwɛ, B. Lokɔkɔmyɛ)

2) Bongangɛ of Bakoyɔ, or Bolima

3) Bongangɛ of Mbɔmbɛ or Basɛkɛ Botɛna

Thus Lotɔlɛ, Bakoyɔ, and Mbɔmbɛ each have an Etɔo group and a Bongangɛ group. The Bongangɛ, in the narrow sense of the term, have in addition a "slave" group named Batsɛna, a part of which is located with the Bosɛnjo. A foreign clan is settled with the Etɔo of Lotɔlɛ; they are the Bofalambɔka, descendant of a man named Ekonda (Imbolo) and his sister who was married to Mbete, a slave from Bompɛngɛ (Wɛngatɛ) who was freed by his master.

Many villages have foreign groups living with them such as descendants of slaves (ekwɛla), or others (Ekonda, Bombwanja, groups related by marriage called likilo, mpɛmɛ or bowɛlɛ, and mɔtsolɛ, (1) etc.). [249]

1. Mpɛmɛ or bowɛlɛ are any foreigners who were formerly invited by the group patriarch to remain with him in order to carry out certain tasks, especially metal-working. Mbɔtsolɛ is the term applied to a child born to a woman out of wedlock (Chapter I, Part 2, Article IV, 3). Such children are also called nkio y'ɔɔme, "the husband's flying dogs," because they are not his own children but are attached to their mother's husband in the fashion of these animals, who attach themselves to trees when they sleep.

If we add the descendants of relatives who have married into other more or less remote groupings, the prohibition against marriage on account of kinship applies to a good many people. In accordance with the law of exogamy, such a kin group may be widely dispersed geographically, and it is understandable that it is not always easy to

to which she devotes her time, sitting on a couch or a log, so occupies her attention that she is no longer aware that her narrow garment is no longer in its proper modest position, and the gossip is therefore exposed to shame and ridicule.

In addition to giving his wife a good whipping, the husband also brings out his vocabulary of invective and sarcasm. The woman does not run the risk of complaining, for she knows in advance that she will be placed in the wrong. Nevertheless, the discreet husband will not go too far. The elders suggest that the young people moderate the violence of their expressions. For, they say, "a woman is more sensitive to it than a man; she might go and hang herself in the forest," lĭkinya ɛyakɔma lɛ́ɛ́ la nɔ́ɔnyi, "lĭkinya (the ant) will hang herself one day out of an excess of shame" (this is a reference to the way this insect bites into a blade of grass or some other object and dies rather than let go). "And above all," they say, "do not extend your insults to your wives' parents, for they could urge their daughters to leave you."

With respect to adultery, the punishments prescribed in Nkundɔ́ law will be examined below in Article VIII.

It is apparent from the preceding description that the Nkundɔ́ attach relatively little importance to the outpourings of loquacious eloquence characteristic of the weaker sex as long as they do not go beyond limits or degenerate into outrageous and ignominious insults. The elders teach youth to be calm in the face of these demonstrations of the declamatory art at which most Negresses are as adept as our fishwives at home.

They say that a woman is like an elephant: bɔ̆moto ale ɛ́ njoku. There is nothing to be done about her. It is futile [286] to try and speak gently to her; she does not even listen. To impose silence on her is impossible. To try and calm her, make her listen to reason, is a waste of effort. It is the same with an elephant: He can perhaps be chased away with cries and noise, but he will destroy the crops nonetheless.

The fact that a woman readily opens her mouth is not considered a sign that she does not love her husband. The Nkundɔ́ even

payment rightly owed, and in the absence of an adequate translation, "indemnity" is still the least inaccurate. (1)

1. The words used for "reward" are bokɔndo, which is a reward for an unusual service, like the capture of a leopard or another "royal" animal (nyam ɛ́'ekofo, such as a python, an eagle, etc.) or a beautiful dance, and mbuneji, which is a reward for small services.

One point remains to be noted. The two forms of punishment, violence and indemnity, may not be combined, and this principle is applied in all situations (2). Should this prohibition be

2. For example, see also Chapter VIII, Article III, 1.

construed as an implicit condemnation of violent measures? Or have we here the use of a system of settlement? It is difficult to settle this question, and actually the two explanations overlap at least in part.

It is not without interest to note that, in order to justify sanctions against the accomplice, the Nkundɔ́ invoke his frequently dominant role in adultery. Actually they reason that a woman is weak by nature; her emotions predominate, she is easily led and resists enticement only with difficulty. A man on the other hand is more reasonable, better able to control himself. Sanctions enacted and applied against the wife alone would not only leave out the punishment of one of the two culprits,but they would also be inadequate for the preservation of social order, since the woman remains exposed to succumbing out of weakness in spite of the penalties. The severity of Nkundɔ́ law with regard to the corporal punishment of the wife, which exists in spite of these considerations, are explained in terms of the woman's sensitive nature and of the power her husband has over her which he lacks in relation to her accomplice.

764 to return to join the procession, or may be able to do so only with
[584] difficulty.

The act of carrying a corpse to its native clan is not designated by any specific term. The expression is simply tsíka iláka, "to go and return the corpse."

764 In one or more places near the entrance to the village, a
431 barrier (bokáko, lokombí, or lofilaka) made of posts and palms is set up. There the relatives of the deceased, armed, wait for the procession of the husband's relatives, who are also armed, and forbid them to continue their march. Before passing, the latter must make a payment. The valuables given are called by[illegible]ko by ɔ̊káko or simply bokáko (or lofilaka). The family of the deceased calls to the procession, "Halt! You will not pass here." The latter reply, "We come to bring [426] you the corpse of your child; we want to break down the barrier. Let us pass; here are
[584] the gifts." The ndonga hands over a knife, a brass or copper ring, or some equivalent object (for instance, money, nowadays). Thereupon the members of the deceased's clan move away. The bɛ́nambótswá (persons related to both clans) break down the barrier, and the procession passes, headed by the ndonga and the bɛ́nambótswá. The husband follows the coffin.

764 In the past it was almost always necessary to force a passage
519 through the barrier. The wife's family did not want to open and the husband's family did not want to pay, and so they came to blows. The group bearing the corpse tried to break down the barrier, while their adversaries tried to prevent them from doing so. The arms used in that struggle were chiefly pointed sticks which the members of the two camps threw at each other; more rarely, arrows were used. The specific name for this sort of brawl is ekɔ́kɔ́lá. Certain clans specialize in this sport. Thus between Bofimbo and Lileko, there is a regular battle every time. In such serious cases the barrier is heavily fortified; the posts are thick and hard, and intertwined with thorny creepers (bokau, lonyolí, wangandíla, etc.) and thorny shrubs (wɛ́ngɛ́, etc.). A quantity
●[525] of venomous biting ants (bafumba, mbómbá, by[illegible]mbo, etc.) are added. If the brawl becomes serious, the ndonga and the other bɛ́nambówa intervene and impose peace by requiring the husband's clan to pay.

843 177 The Nkundó know an antidote (nsengó or losenjó), however, a means of getting rid of such annoying obstacles. Of the three known processes the last is especially common at present.

1) The husband (or any person to whom the wekí is attached and who wants to be rid of it) picks up a nkongolí chilopod, naturally by means of a leaf, encloses it in a large leaf which he binds with a thin creeper, and makes a small package of it, as one makes a package of meat, fish, etc. He gives this package to his wife, who thinks it contains food and opens it without any suspicion. But when she sees the detested arthropod, she throws it far from her with cries of disgust, while her husband says to her, "You are the one who remains with the wéki." As a result he himself is freed from it.

2) A second means is to take the pregnant woman by the nose when an opportunity presents itself and to say to her: "May the wéki remain attached to you."

3) The woman prepares some imbóndó (manioc leaves [474] salted and dipped in palm oil). The two spouses eat it together contrary to the usual practice. But the husband arranges matters in such a way that his wife gets the last mouthful and keeps the leaf which serves as a plate and represents the wéki. Then the husband says to her, "Keep the wéki for yourself."

The wéki cannot be detached from the woman, for she is the bomóngo wéki, "the owner of the wéki," the one who is the basis for it. For her it continues until the child is on the point of being born (elaki ó yémi yótinda, literally "he has come to the end of his growth," or yótikama, "has turned to one side"), and thus, in practice, until the birth of the child.

If a first wife dies at the beginning of her first pregnancy, a cesarian operation must be performed on her. The fetus is removed (it is still no more than an embryo -- lilóngólí or bokelé, literally "an egg," or lilóngó, literally "blood") so that it can be buried behind the hut. An omission of this practice would result in the death through pregnancy of the deceased's husband's other wives or of the women he will subsequently marry.

3. The period of prohibitions

§43 When a pregnancy is far advanced -- about two or three months before delivery (a period which has now been reduced to one or two weeks) -- the Nkundó proceed with the "preservation of the fetus" (bâomba ɛ́mí, "they preserve the fetus," or bâaka ɛ́mí, "they fasten the fetus"). The period called bokeka or bokeko begins at that moment and does not end until after childbirth. The oral expression is lémba bokeka, "to bind the period of sexual prohibitions." (1) This term also extends to all special

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1. The expression lémba lɔ́mbá is also used. A similar period of sexual prohibitions called by the same name still exists for, among other things, circumcision, the construction of a hunting enclosure, and the setting of elephant traps.

prohibitions (bikilá) resulting from this condition. [475]

For the first pregnancy the period begins with the following [316] ceremony: The woman's mother smears her daughter's head and [302] all of her body with a red paint called ngóla. This paint, usually used as make-up, is used here as a mark of affection and given to honor and congratulate the future mother on this happy occasion. When the ngóla is somewhat hardened, the mother smears her daughter's hair with it and rolls the hair into little balls, using an iron bosóngó, which is the instrument usually used for hairdressing. Then she gives her daughter a hen and some bananas to eat. From then on the pregnant woman may no longer eat hens, for the con- [315] sumption of this bird (which the Nkundó place in the same category as ducks) and its eggs would stop the normal development of the fetus. The ceremony is called ɲa bongata (eleku among the Bombwanja), "to smear with red paint in little balls."

The woman's father and the husband's kin feel strongly about being present at this ceremony, for it is considered very important. I know of an intense palaver which occurred because

843 3) They must not climb up on the roof (they are not forbidden to climb a palm tree in order to cut off nuts).

4) They must not eat animals killed by a carnivore (leopard, 843 crocodile, etc.), or the child would die a sudden and unnatural 262 death like the victims of such wild beasts. [480]

● 825 5) They must abstain from animals such as porcupines, anteaters, certain birds, crocodiles, and gavials, (1) who are in

1. In this region women never eat snakes or bats (loléma, bonkóm, ffukyá).

the habit of living in the hollows of trees or in dens. The delivery would be very painful if they ate them, for the child would roll up and crouch in the mother's womb. Fish that find shelter in passageways do not produce such consequences and are therefore eaten.

6) They must not eat turtles (2). A very difficult birth

2. In some tribes (Bongili, Bonkoso) women always abstain from eating such reptiles.

is feared, for the turtle withdraws into its shell and encloses its anal extremities as in a vise, and the child would do the same.

7) They must not eat the head of a monkey. The child would be born with deep-set eyes resembling the monkey's.

8) They must not eat the large antelope known as mbuli, because it has a long neck and flabby flesh, and the child would acquire the same defects.

9) They must not eat the lioólé fish, which would cause [153] migraines, since it swims fiercely without direction.

The results of boleka and the obligations resulting from it 843 are connected with natural paternity. Thus, if a woman becomes 937 pregnant as a result of relations with a regular, recognized lover, the latter must assume all responsibility. He is required to "fasten the fetus" and to observe all the regulations pertaining to the

845 In other respects he is not differentiated from the other two. Greetings are not tripled in the case of triplets.

A child born directly after twins is called Wuteji (from utela, "to repeat"). He is in no way different from other children.

Article VII. Circumcision

Circumcision is generally practiced. It does not have to
304 be performed at any particular age. It is usually done during childhood before the tenth year. The more timorous put it off until puberty or even later. Special customs of individual clans sometimes set a time. Thus, a man of the village of Besombó is not allowed to be circumcised until he has killed an animal at the hunt. On the other hand, the season during which circimcisions are performed is specified: they must take place during the period when the water level is low.

The operation may be performed by any man who is expert at it. It is carried out behind the huts. No one but the boys being operated on and their fathers are present. The boys stand in a group somewhat apart from the proceedings but place themselves so that with their eyes they can follow the treatment to which their companion is being subjected. The patient squats. One of the elderly assistants places his hands over the boy's eyes so that he cannot see what is happening. The person performing the operation has already dug a small pit to catch the blood. He pulls the foreskin, ties it with a string, and then uses ashes to trace the line which must be followed by the empúte knife that is used on such occasions. When the blood has stopped flowing, he chews some bondóngó
[824] pepper (Aframomum . . .) or, preferably, [506] a caudal fin of
[825] the ngolo fish and then spits it onto the wound. The resulting sensation is very painful. But the patient shows that he is brave; for if he cries he is mocked by his companions.

As long as the wound is not healed, the boy must not use
[261] manioc leaves (bangánju) or manioc bread in the preparation of bosombó or lóóto. Nor may he eat the skin, head, or tail of fish.

While the wound is healing, the boy who has been circumcised is cared for, washed, etc., by his mother or, if he has reached

7:Brown M-5 (ca. 1940) 1944 FO32 Mongo FO32
Ntomba

literally that the deceased has hanged the heart, the former is used of a tree which leans over and falls from a great cut at its base.

On the announcement of the death, an expert drummer drums out the news. There will be at least four drums of the type known as *lokuku*, and a *nsngu*.[1] The four drums are called by the names, *Epunda*, having the 'biggest voice', that is a deep bass note, *Mongye*, having a higher note, *Mongonda*, a high pitched note, and *Monkoto*, having a very high penetrating note. To these four drums others are added; if the *nkumu* himself did not possess sufficient, they would be borrowed from the surrounding villages, and their notes matched with those of the first three drums, being beaten with them in their turn. *Monkoto* is beaten simultaneously with *Epunda*, giving a rhythmic tattoo. When the news of the death has been sent out on *Epunda*, the funeral drumming commences, as follows:

Mongonda. Botianganu w'Amba lokolo,
Mongye. Ntsala ikits, otongonoko,
Epunda. Tokund' ibenge molom' o nyama,
Ombolekeke mmenge,
Lobanga lolenda otondo,
Bikeku bilenda lobola.
Nsngu. Tobilake nkoi nkonge,
Tobilake nkoi nkonge, &c.

The English and the interpretation are as follows:

Mongonda. A scattering of Amba, the snail. (The mother of twins, always called Amba, here gives her name to the snail because of her prolific progeny, which, upon being introduced to the world, scatter, while the mother dies. So the death of the *nkumu* will cause a scattering of his many wives and children.)

Mongye. Feathers fall; pick them up. (That is to say, for your arrow shafts, for if you don't, and come back later, the wind will have scattered them and you won't find them. So while the *nkumu* was alive it was the time for his children to learn his teachings so that when palavers came after his death they would be well acquainted with his wisdom and know how to settle them.)

Epunda. We are burying the *ibenge*, husband of animals, You have just eaten *mwenge*, The chin looks up at the ridge pole, The jaw bones look up at the sky. (*The ibenge is an animal much prized for its fat meat; the nkumu always gets his share when it is killed, and the skin is made into carrying straps for infants, and into belts. Batwa are prohibited the use of it for any purpose. It is therefore fitting to liken the nkumu to the ibenge. Mwenge* (sing. *lobenge*) is the equivalent of a snack. When a woman brings her cassava from the swamp where it has been soaking for several days, her husband may be too hungry to wait the long hours required to cook it, so to appease his hunger his wife takes a piece or two of the unprepared root, splits it in two, places salt between, wraps it in a *lokombe* leaf and roasts it in the hot ashes, where it is quickly cooked. So the *nkumu* just had time to eat a few *mwenge*; he didn't wait for the big cooking; his life was suddenly cut off.)

Nsngu. Don't pull out the leopard's eyelashes. (That is, while he is alive; now he is dead one can disregard his power.)

[1] A *lokuku* is a slit gong made from a hollowed log. Its two notes are produced by striking the two lips of the slit. A *nsngu* is a hollowed log, open at one end, across which is stretched a vellum hide.